



# IMPROVING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

## Veterans Experience Office FY2021

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



### CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE DATA:



#### VSIGNALS

**99** Surveys **↑ (34 new)**

**12.7M** Surveys sent **↑ 33.49%**

**16%** Response rate **↓ 1%**

**533K** Free-text responses **↓ 2.22%**

**3,217** Crisis alerts **↑ 12.01%**



#### INSIGHTS & DESIGN

**16** Journey maps **↑ (9 new)**

**76% VA-WIDE TRUST SCORE (FY21Q4)**

**70%** Ease

**75%** Effectiveness

**73%** Emotion



### CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TOOLS:



#### VA WELCOME KIT & QUICK START GUIDES (QSG)

**146K** Printed and Sent **↑ 37.29%** | **906K** Website and marketing views **↑ 132.52%**

**17** Quick Start Guides **(8 new)** | **364K** PDF Downloads **↑ 141.20%**



#### OWN THE MOMENT (OTM) CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE (CX) TRAINING: EMPLOYEES TRAINED

**189K** VHA employees **↑ 87.67%** | VHA employees **52%**

**60** VBA employees | **258** NCA employees **↑ 62.26%** | **1,141** Board employees



#### PATIENT EXPERIENCE (PX)

**1,500** Symposium / event attendees **↑ 72.61%**

**18K** OTM thank you cards sent

**300** PX Community of Practice monthly participants **↑ 50%**

Percentages based on previous fiscal year

# IMPROVING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES



## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TECHNOLOGY:



### CALL CENTERS:

**2M** Calls to 1-800-MyVA411 **↑ 9.56%**

**1M** Calls answered by VEO Tier 1 **↑ 76.16%**  
Caller abandonment **3.13%**  
Average caller time to speak **31 seconds**

**167K** Calls answered by White House VA Hotline **↓ 5.36%**  
Caller abandonment **3.34%**  
Average caller time to speak **18 seconds**

**1,284**

Warm transfers to crisis lines **↑ 15.35%**

**123K**

Non-clinical COVID-19 calls diverted from VA Medical Centers (VAMCs) **↑ 256.46%**

Did not require escalation back to VAMC **88%**



### VA PROFILE:

**16.3M** Veteran's contact information **↑ 8.67%** | **1.2M** New records created **↑ 56.83%**

**40** Partner systems **↑ 66.67%** | **364.7M** Data transactions **↑ 64.70%**



### OFFICE OF CLIENT RELATIONS:

**4,329** Messages received **↑ 83.98%** | **3,480** Service recovery cases **↑ 146.46%**

Average resolution **9 business days** **↓ 18.18%**



### VA.GOV:

**125.4M** Visits **↑ 2.33%** | **64.10%** User satisfaction **↑ 19.14%**

**38M** Successful transactions completed | **396K** Disability applications submitted

**61M** Appointment reminders via SMS **↑ 12.96%**



### VETERAN IDENTIFICATION CARD:

**123K** Card applications requested **↑ 30.25%** | **133K** Approved **↑ 41.09%**



### KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT:

**129K** Users **↑ 15.88%** | **180** Authors **↑ 50%**

**29K** Articles **↑ 15.16%** | **7.86M** Article views **↑ 8.12%**

Percentages based on previous fiscal year

# IMPROVING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES



## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE ENGAGEMENT:



### VETERANS EXPERIENCE ACTION CENTERS (VEAC):

**8** Held **↑ 166.67%** | **3,548** Participants **↑ 82.23%**  
**2,018** Agency and community referrals **↑ 972.34%** | **117** Peer-to-peer referrals

#### VEAC TRUST SCORE

**73.3%** Trust  
**84.6%** Ease  
**87.9%** Effectiveness  
**93.1%** Emotion



### #VETRESOURCES NEWSLETTER:

**657M** Emails sent **↑ 19.02%** | **128M** Opens **↓ 21.42%** | **19.59%** Open rate  
**30M** Clicks **↓ 8.77%** | **23.81%** Click rate



### VA EVENTS CALENDAR:

**1,547** Events posted **↑ 774.01%** | **3.7M** Views **↑ 1616%**



### VETERANS EXPERIENCE LIVE (VETXL):

**12** Events hosted **↑ 9.09%** | **1.45M** Views **↓ 36.86%**  
**2,630** Questions/responses **↓ 68.97%**



### COMMUNITY VETERANS ENGAGEMENT BOARDS (CVEBS):

**126** Active **↓ 22.70%**



## LEADING VA'S CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE (CX) MISSION

- » **VA Directive 0010: Customer Experience (December 2020):** This directive establishes policy, requirements and accountability to ensure all Veterans, Service members, their families, caregivers and survivors receive consistent, world-class experiences across VA. This directive is in accordance with 38 C.F.R. Part 0, §§ 0.600-0.603, which defines Core Values, Characteristics and Customer Experience Principles of the Department, delineating the essential components of an effective CX practice to be implemented nationally across VA.
- » **Published CX Cookbook (November 2020):** In 2018, VA/VEO was designated as lead agency partner with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to drive the President's Management Agenda (PMA) Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goal on Improving Customer Experience with Federal Services. As a capstone project at the conclusion of the PMA cycle, VA/VEO created a CX practitioner's guide to share with sister agencies to help build, mature and sustain CX capabilities.
- » **Leadership VA (LVA) Fellowship:** Delivered human-centered design (HCD) training to introduce VEO's CX framework to the next generation of VA leaders. The training, which included 100 participants, focused on applying HCD to student capstone projects. Survey results indicated a significant improvement in understanding and confidence in using HCD methods to improve CX.
- » **Established VACXi:** Laid the groundwork for the VA Customer Experience Institute (VACXi), refining the strategy and developing the operational framework, foundational training, website and engagement strategy, for launch in FY2022.





Percentages based on previous fiscal year







## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE DATA




### » Improving Customer Feedback in the Contact Center

**Experience:** Implemented a unified contact center survey, using the Veterans Signals (VSignals) survey platform. By allowing survey responses to be compared across contact centers, VSignals enables VA to better identify customer needs and increase service recovery opportunities. VSignals surveys now cover 18 out of 43 VA contact centers, spanning 35% of all VA contact center call volume.    


### » New Journey Maps Created:


- EEO
- Employee Experience (EX)
- EX Onboarding
- Geriatrics and Extended Care (GEC)
- Loan Guaranty
- Native American Veterans Experience
- Telehealth
- Transition Care Management/VA Liaison Program
- VA Pathways to Care
- Women Veterans Benefits Experience    


### » Veterans Health Administration (VHA) VSignals Customer Feedback Surveys:

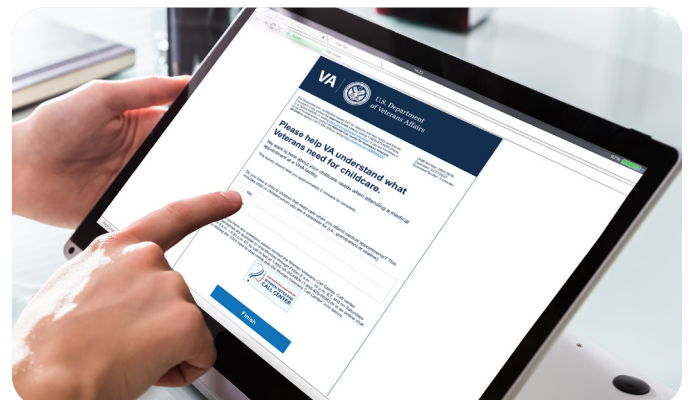
- VEO maintains multiple surveys across Veterans Health Administration (VHA) offices. Surveys have been deployed for the following offices: Outpatient, Telehealth, Telehealth Provider, Compensation and Pension, Emergency Medicine, No Show, Office of Community Care, Same Day Services, Inpatient, Readjustment Counseling Service (RCS) VetCenters, and GEC. The following new surveys were deployed this year: 
- The **Telehealth Emergency Medicine Survey** measures the experience of Veterans who use Telehealth for Emergency care.
- The **No Show Imaging Survey** helps VHA measure why Veterans do not show up for a mammography appointment.
- The **Community Emergency Care Survey** measures the experience of Veterans who use community care for emergency medicine or urgent care.

- **The Inpatient Survey** helps measure the experience of Veterans that have inpatient visits at VHA facilities.
- **RCS VetCenter Surveys:** Developed five surveys to measure the experience during key milestones of the VetCenter journey, initial engagement, new client intake, and development of a counselor client relationship. Two additional surveys were developed to gather data from clients who stop engaging with VetCenters as well as those who return after a period of disengagement.
- The **GEC Survey** measures the experience of Veterans and their caregivers newly using GEC services to understand if they understood why they were referred to GEC, if it was a joint decision, and if their changing needs are being addressed.

» **Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) VSignals Customer Feedback Surveys:** VEO maintained nine surveys for VBA, measuring the experience of Veterans at VBA contact centers, Education service and the Appeals Management Office. 

» **National Cemetery Administration (NCA) VSignals Customer Feedback Survey:** Deployed a survey to measure the experience of individuals who contact the NCA Contact Center. This is part of an ongoing Enterprise Contact Center Council effort to standardize the surveys used at VA contact centers, enabling the comparison of contact center performance across VA. 

» **Measuring the Board's Experience:** VEO maintained four surveys for the Board, measuring the experience of Veterans working through the appeals process. 





## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE DATA



» **VHA Consolidated Dashboard:** Developed dashboard integrating all VHA VSignals data and providing one-stop-shop view.



### VHA V SIGNALS CONSOLIDATED DASHBOARD

#### OUTPATIENT SURVEYS

- Outpatient - Scheduling an Appointment
- Outpatient - Healthcare Visit
- Outpatient - Pharmacy (In-Person)
- Outpatient - Pharmacy (Mail)
- Outpatient - Labs/Imaging
- VHA C&P Exam - Scheduling an Appointment
- VHA C&P Exam - Examining Clinician

#### INPATIENT SURVEY

- Inpatient

#### TELEHEALTH SURVEYS

- Telehealth Appointment Scheduling - CVT
- VAMC or CBOC Appointment - CVT
- Home or Mobile Appointment - CVT
- S&F VAMC or CBOC Appointment
- Telehealth Store & Forward at Home or Mobile Appointment
- Telehealth Store & Forward Result
- Remote Patient Monitoring - Home Telehealth Continuing Patient

#### EMERGENCY MEDICINE SURVEYS

- Emergency Medicine with comments
- Emergency Medicine without comments
- Telehealth Emergency Medicine Survey with comments
- Telehealth Emergency Medicine Survey without comments

#### NO-SHOW SURVEYS

- Mental Health Survey - Established Patient
- Mental Health Survey - New Patient
- Radiology & Nuclear Medicine Survey

#### COVID-19 PREFERENCE FOR CARE SURVEYS

- General COVID-19
- Post In-Person COVID-19
- Telehealth COVID-19

#### COVID-19 VACCINE SURVEYS

- COVID-19 Post Vaccination Survey
- COVID-19 Acceptance Survey

#### SAME DAY SERVICES SURVEY

- Same Day Services

#### OFFICE OF COMMUNITY CARE SURVEYS

- Choosing VA Community Care
- Scheduling VA Community Care
- Attending VA Community Care
- Filling a Prescription Under Community Care
- Understanding Financial Responsibility with Community Care (Call VA about VA Community Care Billing Questions Community Emergency Care)

#### GERIATRICS AND EXTENDED CARE (GEC) SURVEY

- GEC Experience Survey

#### » Insights and Design Projects:

- **Future of Telehealth:** VEO partnered with the VHA Office of Telehealth to improve Veteran experience with early service touchpoints and increase trust and confidence in VA's telehealth service. VEO interviewed 24 Veterans and 24 staff members, conducted six focus groups across six sites and produced an insights report identifying telehealth moments that matter. VEO also developed several tools to aid telehealth providers in aligning around a common understanding of the experience and addressing Veteran needs and expectations. These include: an Experience framework, appointment considerations, and a series of nine huddle challenges. VEO implemented the huddle challenges in Amarillo, Texas. In the latter part of FY2021, VEO initiated work on the second year of the partnership with the VHA Office of Telehealth/Office of Connected Care. A **Telehealth Playbook** is planned and under development. It will contain

plays that empower care teams to address the moments that matter and serve as a resource guide for all things telehealth. 🗺️

- **GEC:** Completed 36 HCD interviews which were summarized into a journey map, insights report and used to inform the development of a CX survey (launched August 2021). 🗺️
- **LGBTQ+ Experience:** Completed 24 HCD interviews and presented findings to the LGBT Workgroup that were used to inform the decision to change the name of the VHA LGBT Program to LGBTQ+ to be more inclusive. 🗺️
- **VA Pathways to Care:** Conducted 51 HCD interviews to explore Veteran experiences in accessing care from the moment they request care to the moment they receive it. This project also helped to understand the differences in how Veterans with more complex needs experience care than those with more simplistic ones. Delivered an insights presentation and VA Pathways to Health Insight Map. 🗺️





## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE DATA



- **Transition Care Management / VA Liaison Program:**

Conducted research to map the experience of Veterans with the VA Liaison Program and to institute Veteran-centered measurement of the experience. Completed 35 HCD interviews and delivered an insights report and journey map. 🗣️

- **Community Care Portal:** Gathered feedback from 40 HCD interviews to build out prototypes of a Veteran-facing portal and a Provider-facing portal for a more consolidated, simplified, streamlined place to engage with community care. 🗣️

- **VHA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** Completed 57 HCD interviews with Veterans from minority groups to understand disparities in accessing care with VHA. Provided support with scribing and synthesizing findings from 50+ virtual listening sessions with various groups from underserved and marginalized populations including women, LGBTQ+, religious minorities, and racial/ethnic minorities. 🗣️

- **Caregiver Listening Sessions:** Supported the Caregiver Support Program Office by developing an approach and synthesizing data from three listening sessions to gather feedback regarding what services they provide. 🗣️

- **Veteran-Centered Policing:** Developed an OTM Workshop for Policing and recorded a training session. 🗣️

- **Spiritual Care:** Completed research with 27 Veterans and 10 chaplains regarding the impact of new approaches to meet Veterans' spiritual needs introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. 🗣️

- **Future of Telehealth:** Deliverables to date include two insights reports, Telehealth Moments that Matter, Telehealth Experience Framework, Appointment Considerations and the Huddle Challenges. 🗣️

- **Wayfinding Artifact:** Project is a collaboration with VHA's Environmental Programs Services (Interior Design) to consolidate and build best practices for wayfinding in response to an outpatient moment



that matters: navigation challenges can cause stress and frustration. Design pillars have been defined to guide local facility efforts based on patient experience in support of a summary wayfinding document to be distributed. 🗣️

- **Native American Veterans Benefits Experience:**

In collaboration with VBA and the Office of Tribal Government Relations, conducted 72 HCD interviews and site visits to understand how Native Americans make decisions about benefits and services and to uncover opportunities to improve existing outreach. 72 Native American Veterans from different eras were interviewed during the project, producing 2,700 data points, 424 thematic groupings and six unique insights. Produced a journey map and insights report. 🗣️

- **Loan Guaranty – Special Adapted Housing:**

Conducted research to understand the experience with this program. Completed 42 HCD interviews and delivered an insights report and journey map that were used to inform where to institute CX measurement around the moments that matter to customers throughout this experience. 🗣️

- **Debt Process / Decision Review Notice:** Conducted an analysis of call center data and put forward recommended changes to VBA letters regarding debt/decision review. 🗣️



## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE DATA



- **Women Veterans Benefits Experience Journey**

**Map and Prototypes:** Conducted discovery research with 64 Veteran women and 12 Veteran men to understand the experience of women Veterans as they access VA benefits and services throughout their lifetime and how their journeys may differ from those of Veteran men. Produced a journey map, customer personas and insights report. In partnership with VBA and the Center for Women Veterans, three prototype solutions are under development to enhance the benefits experience and heighten awareness of woman-specific improvement areas.

» **Employee Experience (EX):**

- **Hiring Round Table:** Hosted listening sessions with hiring managers across the Department, identifying 150+ pain points. The pain points were grouped into five themes: accountability, flexibility, need for transparency, lack of flexibility and use of minimum qualifications as a selecting factor.
- **VA Employee Experience (Capability Development):** Through the EX environmental scan, VEO engaged more than 185 stakeholders across Administrations and Staff Offices to inform a future state vision, identify organizational needs for EX services and capabilities and highlight factors that will enable EX success.
- **VA EX Career Development:** Conducted research involving HCD interviews and designed two prototypes, Ask Me Anything and the Anonymous Job Application prototypes to improve career development opportunities for GS-0343s.
- **Inclusion-Diversity Equity and Accessibility (I-DEA):** VEO is partnering with the Office of Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion on an Identity Insights Project that will examine the experience of eight identity groups (LGBTQ+, Women, Black/African American, Individuals with Disabilities, Hispanic, Native American & Pacific Islanders, Native American, Age) across six EX relationships (work, technology, place, people, organization, well-being) to understand challenges, needs, pain points and opportunities. This work will be done by gathering data (employee interviews

and focus groups) and organizing/analyzing insights. The long-term intended impact of the project is an improvement in employees' sense of belonging at VA across identity groups.

- **Onboarding Deep Dive:** VEO and Human Resources identified moments that matter throughout an employee's onboarding by completing a HCD sprint, highlighting pain points and bright spots on a journey map and insights report. The EX team developed concepts to improve employee satisfaction which include two pilot programs, the New Employee Welcome Kit (ActiVate) and the New Employee Buddy program.
- **Employee Journey Map:** VA created the Federal government's first-ever EX Journey Map. Modeled after VA's transformational Journey of Veterans Map, the EX Journey Map captured over 11,000 insights from a diverse set of VA employees in 33 geographic areas. This effort identified five phases, 23 employment stages, and 30 moments that matter (bright spots and pain points) that VA team members may encounter, from interest in employment with VA through separation. The map continues to guide EX projects and is an integral part of the EX framework.





## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TOOLS



» **I CARE Refresh:** Transitioned the program from the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer to VEO.



- Updated Annual I CARE TMS Training (VA# 3901227) and New Employee Orientation, tying CX principles to VA's core values and characteristics. Since it's relaunch more than 131,000 employees completed the TMS training.
- [Created capability for Veterans to recognize employees that exhibit I CARE values.](#) Through this, VEO publicly highlighted five VA employees' outstanding efforts in serving Veterans, families, caregivers, survivors and employees.

» **Quick Start Guides (QSGs)**

- [Get Started with Veteran State Benefits and Services](#) helps Veterans, family members, caregivers and survivors identify and understand the various benefits and services offered by state governments and how to access those state benefits and services.
- [Get Started with Vet Center Services](#) serves as a navigational aid for Veterans and family members to assist in accessing benefits and services from Vet Centers.



- [Get Started with Veteran Owned Small Business Support](#) helps Veterans understand the VA services and benefits available to Veterans interested in establishing a small business as well as how to qualify for VA contracts intended for a Veteran-Owned Small Business.
- [Get Started with Services for Veterans Ages 65+](#) helps aging Veterans access VA benefits and services that may be of particular interest to Veterans ages 65 and older, which includes financial benefits, health care, caregiver support, home health care, and nursing home care.
- [Get Started with Services for LGBTQ+ Veterans](#) provides LGBTQ+ Veterans available VA benefits and services to more effectively and efficiently access a VA resources. This QSG also provides relevant information regarding LGBTQ+ services to help improve VA's relationship with Veterans who have not always felt welcomed at VA and/or were often unaware of the many VA services and benefits for which they might qualify.
- [Get Started with Food and Nutrition Services](#) intended to help Veterans, family members, and caregivers understand the healthy food classes and nutrition services available from VA and the Department of Agriculture and help Veterans, family members, and caregivers apply for food assistance benefits, if needed.
- [Get Started with Whole Health Services](#) intended to help Veterans, family members, caregivers and survivors find resources on their "Live Whole Health" journey.
- [Apply for Burial in a VA National Cemetery and for Memorial Products](#) intended to help Veterans, family members, and survivors apply for burial in a VA national cemetery, a Government-furnished headstone, marker, or medallion for burial in a private cemetery, a Presidential Memorial Certificate and a burial flag.





## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TOOLS



### » Patient Experience (PX) Programs

- **Relaunched Inpatient Solutions:** A suite of PX toolkits were developed to improve the inpatient stay and discharge process at VAMCs with acute care. A one-hour TMS training course (PX Toolkits to Improve the Inpatient Experience (VA# 43530)) was published to educate employees on the toolkits, why facilities should use the toolkit, and how to utilize change management principles to implement. 
    - Commit to Sit
    - Discharge Checklist Toolkit
    - Discharge Resource Guide (formerly Caregiver Support Guide)
    - Hourly Nurse Rounding
    - Interdisciplinary Team Rounding
    - Journey to Discharge Hospitalization Journal
    - Patient Communication Whiteboards
    - Quiet at Night Toolkit: An FY2020 PX Award Winner, this toolkit is designed to improve the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems Quietness of the Hospital measures by implementing a set of strategies for VA medical facilities to adopt to help patients receive uninterrupted rest within inpatient settings. Iron Mountain Medical Center implemented the toolkit and noted a 20% improvement in the VA Survey of Healthcare Experiences of Patients Quietness of Hospital score, subsequently improving overall satisfaction with hospital stay from 85.6% in June 2021 to 88.5% in September 2021.
  - **Developed and Published the PX Implementation Guide:** Designed as an off-the-shelf guide to allow front-line employees to deploy solutions and tools to improve Veteran experiences, the PX Implementation Guide provides a recommended implementation framework for utilization throughout the process life cycle, from design, to pilot, to sustainment. The guide was developed using evidence-based and proven strategies, including a change management methodology. 
  - **Implemented a PX Change Management Training:** Through collaboration with Patient Experience University (PXU), developed a two-hour change management training built on Prosci's ADKAR (Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, Reinforcement) model to provide on-site or virtual training to targeted groups, stakeholders, and servant leaders with a focus on people, process, and culture and how it relates to PX. The training was designed to assist facilities in learning how to utilize change management methodologies with the implementation of PX toolkits. In FY2021, VA PX conducted four VAMC on-site trainings for over 300 employees. 
    - **Implemented Coaching Support:** Provided virtual coaching support to 20 VAMCs. The support was designed to assist with overcoming barriers/challenges associated with toolkit implementation. Total contract cost avoidance: \$176,160. 
    - **Redesigned Employee PX Badges:** Created and validated the PX badge designs to improve the connection between employees and Veterans. Delivered the "I Choose VA" badge prototypes and insights from the field to inform implementation efforts. In FY2021, Veterans Integrated Services Network (VISN) 1 piloted the badges and sites within VISNs 2, 6, 10 and 21 began implementation. VISNs 4 and 22 will deploy the badges in FY2022. 
- » **PX Symposium:** Hosted a national PX Symposium, which highlighted PX best practices across VHA. All medical centers, networks offices, and several program offices were represented. The event generated 5.2 million clicks with over 1,500 attendees. Over 88% of attendees agreed that the symposium was valuable to their facility improvement efforts. The symposium promoted and recognized those leading the way in PX with an award ceremony.
- » **PX Consultation:** Completed over 94 separate engagements resulting in a cost avoidance of \$14 million when compared to private sector offerings. 
  - **Conducted 66 PX Data Deep Dives:** Comprehensive crosswalk on all experience scores to identify bright spots and improvement opportunities. 
  - **Conducted 19 Virtual Voice of the Veteran Presentations:** Tool to raise awareness of the moments that matter most to Veterans through a crosswalk of key drivers in experience data. 



## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TOOLS



- **VISN Veteran Experience Committee:** Recurring participation to ensure alignment, awareness, and guidance pertaining to national VA PX initiatives and services and ad hoc data analysis. 🗓️
  - **Data Set Training Series:** Designed to improve data awareness and literacy, increase data access and communication, and both educate and motivate PX professionals on how to utilize 10 sets of experience-related data and reports. Each series averaged over 700 participants. 🗓️
  - **PX Self-Assessment:** An annual, easy-to-use, low-effort tool allowing facilities to determine top areas for targeted PX improvement efforts aligned to the PX Framework and Domains. 🗓️
- » **PX Education:**
- **Developed and Implemented OTM CX Training:** Over 189,000 (52%) VHA employees completed the workshop since establishment. A 2.5-hour self-paced virtual training option was released in FY2021, and over 95,000 VHA employees took the virtual training. 🗓️
  - **PXU:** A course designed to equip VA employees with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to serve as PX champions, PXU curriculum highlights such topics as: Change Management, High Performing Teams, On Stage Coaching Moments, PX 101, PX Data, Servant Leadership, Service Recovery, Systems Thinking, and WECARE Behaviors. In FY2021, the face-to-face PXU session was modified for virtual and hybrid learning, training over 172 VHA employees through nine sessions. 🗓️
    - **Monthly PXU Webinars:** To sustain the CX principles, skills, knowledge, and abilities learned through a PXU session, monthly webinars offer participants a continuous learning opportunity. In FY2021, 12 webinars were hosted with 115 unique participants. 🗓️
    - **PX Professional-1 Certificate Program for PXU Participants:** Graduates from PXU have the option of pursuing a certificate to prove they are PX subject matter experts. Participants must successfully implement a PX project approved by local facility leadership and participate in and review six PXU webinars. In FY2021, three certificates were awarded. 🗓️
  - **OTM Master Trainer Certifications:** Provided virtual support and certification of quality face-to-face implementation of the OTM workshop. Since the implementation, over 100 VHA employees have been certified. 🗓️
  - **Tour of Duty (TOD):** A military culture competency training designed for VA employees to connect in a manner that will ensure lifelong healing relationships with Veterans, TOD is accredited and approved for 3.4 credit hours. In FY2021, TOD was piloted at the Asheville VAMC for 56 participants. 🗓️
  - **Designed and Implemented a Virtual Clinical Contact Center CX training:** Through partnership with VHA's VISN 8, developed and implemented a virtual CX training for clinical and administrative staff. Training Contact Center staff in PX precepts provided them the tools to fulfill Veterans' health care needs in a manner that is welcoming, respectful, and builds trust. The training is the baseline for a virtual CX training that will be deployed in FY2022. The FY2021 pilot with VISN 8 trained over 220 Clinical Contact Center employees. Additional trainings were provided to VISN 23 supervisors and VISN 5 Clinical Contact Center triage workgroup. 🗓️
- » **VEO PX SharePoint Site:** The site is the repository for PX services, toolkits, and resources available to VHA staff. Membership has increased by 686% (from 1,400 to more than 9,600 users) with more than 53,000 site visits since launching in March 2020 due to streamlined communication to the field. 🗓️
- » **Red Coat Ambassador Program:** Providing personal navigation assistance by trained volunteers or staff members, in FY2021 the program contributed to 0.8% improvement in ease in the VSignals Outpatient Survey. In collaboration with VHA Voluntary Services and the American Legion, a virtual option of the program is being developed. 🗓️



## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TOOLS



### » Governance:

- **Supported VHA National PX Committee:** Facilitated the development of strategic and operational plans as well as VHA's PX Enterprise-wide Plan. 🗣️
- **Supported VHA's Compliance with OMB A-11 CX Requirements:** Facilitated responses to OMB A-11 CX Requirements including data (outpatient surveys); VHA self-assessments; and VHA national action plans. 🗣️
- **Developed PX Committee Charter and Governance Structure:** The templates provide a standardized process while allowing facilities an opportunity to customize based on complexity. 🗣️
- **Environmental Scan:** Conducted a VHA semiannual environmental scan to assess progress of the PX Experience across the enterprise. 🗣️



- 134 Facilities responded (95% of facilities), improved response rate from 70%
- 114 Conducted PX Self-Assessment
- 104 Developed an PX Action Plan
- 107 Facilities have or will create a dedicated PX officer
- 125 Facilities are using or planning to reimplement Red Coats
- 117 Are using or planning to use WECARE Rounding
- 117 Facilitates continued or scheduled OTM
- 36 Working on implementation of inpatient PX solutions toolkit
- 79 Facilities requested a Data Deep Dive consultation visit

- **VISN Performance Appraisals:** Supported VHA operations in the annual CX appraisal of VISN Directors performance plans. 🗣️
- **Revised PX Guidebook:** Reflects VA Secretary's priorities to include Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Employee Engagement. Developed a communication plan for marketing the guidebook with 2,720 website visits. 🗣️

### • Lung Precision Oncology Program (LPOP):

Leading Veteran Engagement Working Group for the LPOP Executive Steering Committee. 🗣️

- **Collaborated with Program Office:** Worked closely with the VHA Assault and Harassment Office to develop a Congressionally-mandated VSignals safety survey scheduled for release. 🗣️

### » Communication:

- **VHA-Wide PX Community of Practice (COP):** The COP provides a venue to share promising practices, opportunities to showcase innovations in the field, and build PX Champions in VHA facilities across the country who are leading improvements in patient care. In FY2021, membership increased by 200%. 🗣️
- **VA PX Week Resource Guide:** A series of week-long events with the theme of "Better Together, Designed to Reenergize PX Efforts and Educate Employees on PX." Initiated the National Day of Thanks to kick-off PX Week. The dedicated SharePoint resource guide received 5,015 visits. 🗣️
- **Monthly VEO PX Newsletter:** Distributed to over 9,000 VA PX members, the newsletter drives more than 2,400 unique visitors and 6,000 page visits on a monthly basis. 🗣️

- » **OTM for NCA:** Developed tailored workshops for NCA staff at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, and all NCA Pacific District facilities. Nearly 100 NCA employees attended the 10 workshops designed to assist overall CX posture improvement. 🗣️

- » **OTM for VBA (Virtual):** Developed three tailored workshops to improve the overall CX posture for 60 VBA employees who now serve as CX champions in regional offices across VA. 🗣️



## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TECHNOLOGY



» **Digital Experiences - Mobile Access:** Soft-launched the VA Flagship Mobile App to support the 40% increase in VA.gov traffic utilizing mobile devices, allowing Veterans to check the status of their health and benefits services and complete transactional interactions quickly and easily. The app's features include:

- Biometric login for quick account access.
- Editable personal contact information and direct deposit details.
- Claim and appeal status.
- Geolocation to find the nearest VA facilities.
- Secure SMS messaging with VA health providers.
- Access to the Veteran Crisis Line.

» **Improving Single Phone Entry Access to VA:**

Transitioned to MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411), in response to Veteran input. MyVA411 was identified as the easiest number to remember for the VA's telephonic "front door." MyVA411 provides Veterans access to information about VA benefits and services and connects Veterans to any VA Contact Center. MyVA411 also allows Veterans to speak to a live agent 24/365 for basic assistance and facilitates referrals to a specialist best able to assist with complicated requests.

» **Providing Direct Customer Support:**

Collaborated with the Department of Defense (DoD) and State Department to ensure families of U.S. Soldiers killed in action in Kabul, Afghanistan, receive expedited VA services and benefits.

» **Supporting and Safeguarding Veteran Identities:**

Partnered with the Office of Information Security and VHA Member Services to assume responsibility for the Identity Theft Helpline, which provides general information to customers about the Identity Theft program, intakes identity theft allegations and routes cases to the proper authority for resolution. White House VA Hotline customer service representatives answered nearly 900 calls in FY2021 that resulted in more than 80 reported instances of identity theft.

» **Improving the Understanding of Customer Feedback:**

Enabled the VA Secretary to track and report on Veteran cases selected for the "Secretary Letter a Day" initiative that offers direct insights into reasons Veterans contact VA and ongoing efforts to improve service recovery for VA customers. Since implementation in February 2021, the program has included 330 letters.

» **VA Profile:**

• **Centralizing Veteran Contact Information:**



Established VA Profile as the authoritative data source for Veteran contact information, moving VA Profile one step closer to serving as the sole source of such information across all VA lines of business. Also expanded employee access to a single, centralized source for more than 16 million Veteran contact records. VA Profile collects, maintains and instantly synchronizes contact information for use by VA employees as well as Veterans accessing VA self-service portals. FY2021 integrations include the White House VA Hotline and Member Services along with the Mental Health Checkup and Virtual Case Manager mobile apps. The ongoing integration of VA Profile data access and update capabilities across VA provides employees with access to the latest Veteran information and empowers Veterans to update their information through all integrated customer service points of entry, reducing effort and frustration and allowing employees to provide quality CX with the most up-to-date information possible.

• **Improving Veteran Self-Service:** Veterans can now indicate their VA communications preferences on VA Profile-enabled systems, including text and mobile phone, and have those preferences instantly recorded across all VA Profile partner systems. This allows Veterans more choice over how VA contacts them and helps VA inform customers of important updates in the most convenient way possible.








## » Service Recovery Modernization:

- **VA-wide Guidance, Policy, and Training:** The products were developed by the Stakeholder Inappropriate Behavior Workgroup and have been approved by the Service Recovery Council for use in all VA arenas, including phone, in-person, and correspondence scenarios. 
- **Supporting Veteran Service Recovery:** Completed the national rollout of the integration between the new Patient Advocate Tracking System (PATS-R) and the White House VA Hotline customer relationship management (CRM) tool, enabling contact center customer service representatives and the VA Office of Client Relations to send VHA concern cases directly to Patient Advocates at local VAMCs across all VISNs. The integration was deployed to 155 VAMCs nationwide at the end of December 2020, seamlessly transferring VHA concerns, statuses and resolutions to specialized experts operating at local facilities across all VISNs and providing employees with more timely access to information to assist at the point of service. These integrations improve communication with VHA's Office of Patient Advocacy and help reduce Veteran wait time for issue resolution by 40%. PATS-R also now serves as a bidirectional hub for cases passing between the Community Care and White House VA Hotline CRMs. 

## » Digital Experiences:

- **Chatbot Pilot on VA.gov:** Expanded multi-channel access by implementing a chatbot pilot on VA.gov, using artificial intelligence to replicate written or spoken conversation when interacting with VA customers. Virtual agents will direct Veterans to MyVA411 if they need more assistance, with planned ability to escalate callers directly to live agents. 

## » Identity and Access Management (IAM):

- **Supporting Transitioning Service Members:** Launched the national, joint VA/DoD Electronic Healthcare Record Modernization (EHRM) system. The new system, interoperable with DoD, Cerner, and the VAMC VistA system, allows VA and participating community care providers to easily see a Veteran's full medical history in one system, which improves Veteran health care coordination and delivery. The IAM initiative also continued to enhance the quality of information passed through the three systems, allowing for the ability to assign patients unique identifiers, record patient admission, discharge, and transfer messages, process unconscious or unknown patients, and determine Veteran consent status. Additional site-specific support was provided to new facilities participating in the EHRM rollout. 
- **Enhancing Tools for VA Employees:** Integrated Master Person Index identity, provisioning, and authentication services with 20+ applications across VA, connecting Veteran data and information to a single authoritative identity for providers, VA employees, and Veteran representatives. The integrations will enable a more uniform experience for Veterans accessing services via VA.gov and mobile applications, while furnishing providers, claims adjudicators, and Veteran Service Officers with the best information needed in the performance of their duties. It will also reduce the need for data re-entry, simplify system logins, and strengthen protections for Veteran personal identifiable information and protected health information. 



### » VEO Contact Center:

- **Supporting Veteran Caregivers:** Due to an expansion of VHA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, caregivers attempting to speak with a social worker at the Caregiver Support Line (CSP) were experiencing significant waits, which at times exceeded an hour. The VEO Contact Center Tier 1 Business Line offered to assist and within two days assumed responsibility for CSP calls, eliminating those waits by fielding general questions and referring callers to the appropriate Caregiver Program specialist. Over the following four months, the VEO Contact Center assisted nearly 10,000 callers. The outsourcing of calls allowed CSP to hire the staff needed to assume their call volume and to focus in-house resources on case management and clinical needs. 🗣️
- **Responding to COVID-19:**
  - **Tier 1:** The VEO Tier 1 Contact Center continued COVID-19 support for VISNs 20 and 22 and began providing support to VISN 12, leveraging knowledge management support to enable call center staff to provide consistent information on COVID-19, vaccinations, and new presumptive conditions. This support provided 106,000 callers immediate assistance from a live agent. 91,000 (86%) of those callers didn't require escalation to medical center personnel, which allowed those medical personnel to be available to provide clinical care. 🗣️ 📱 🌐 🧑
  - **Voice Access Modernization:** Placed COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) at 27 VA health care facilities across the country and on MyVA411 using IVR capabilities. The FAQs were offered in both English and Spanish and provided Veterans with instant, 24/7 access to information about COVID-19, reducing call volume surges to live customer service representatives by 78%. 🗣️

### • Digital Experiences:

- **Centralizing Information on VA.gov / Improving One-Step Access to VA:** Began the transition of VAMC websites to VA.gov, with 30% of all facility websites now accessible exclusively through VA.gov and an additional 57% hosted on both VA.gov and legacy VAMC webpages. The transition of legacy webpages to a single portal of entry will provide a common look and feel across all VAMC webpages, ensure information is in plain language, and prevent Veterans from having to visit multiple websites for information. This will also improve the ability to make appointments, view health care services, register for care, and access facility locations and contact information. 🗣️ 📱 🌐 🧑
- **Expanded Outreach for COVID-19 Support:** Relaunched the COVID-19 Vaccine page on VA.gov to include Spanish and Tagalog language versions, enabling more customers to access VA resources. 🗣️ 📱 🌐 🧑





## • Enrollment System (ES):

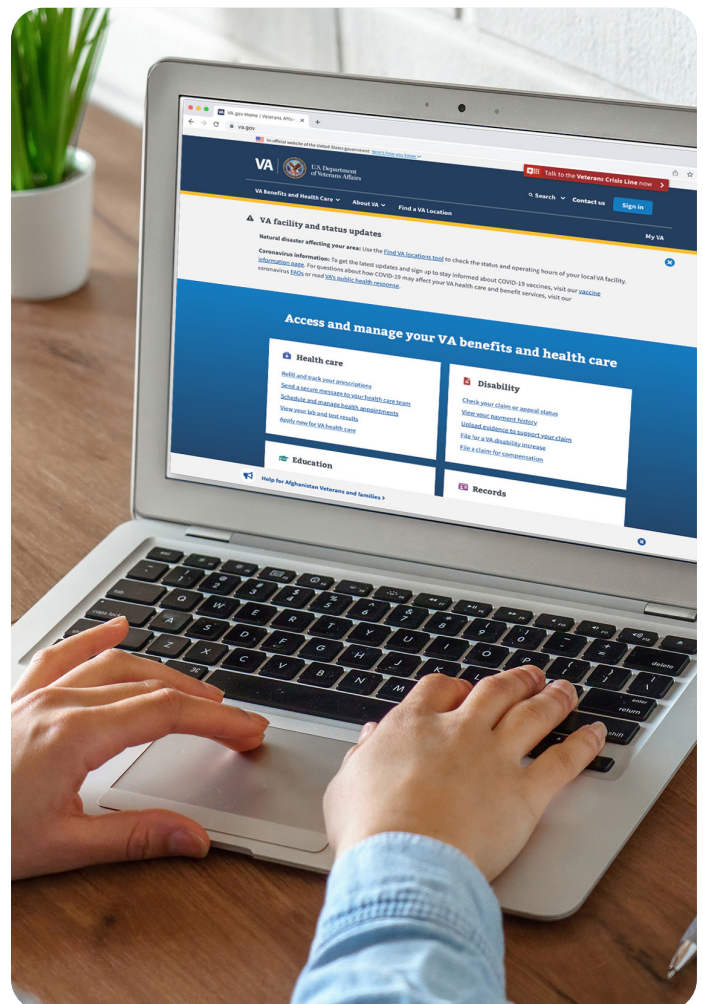
- **Supporting At-Risk Veterans:** Supported expanded Veteran mental health eligibility through suicide high-risk patient enhancements and emergent mental health for Other-Than-Honorable Veterans. As a result, according to the most recent Pentagon statistics, the number of active duty and reserve suicide deaths (115) decreased in the first quarter of 2021 when compared to the first quarter of 2020 (136), while those in the National Guard remained the same (26). Suicide prevention is VA's highest priority, and updating VA's electronic ES to enroll new Veterans and provide health care systems with the information they need is vital in serving these individuals. 🗣️

- **Responding to COVID-19:** Updated the ES to enable VAMCs to provide COVID-19 care to non-Veterans and provided support for COVID-19 vaccination services through ES to Government agencies, Veterans, and Veterans' families and caregivers. ES documented over 3.6 million Veterans, 330,814 VA employees, nearly 30,000 interagency employees, and more than 6,700 caregivers as having received at least one dose, and over 3.4 million Veterans, 307,398 VA employees, 29,395 interagency employees, and 6,578 caregivers as having completed their vaccinations. ES also added caregiver registration capabilities to support the provision of limited VHA treatment and benefits to Veteran caregivers. 🗣️

- » **Improved Debt Management Tools:** Launched a new Debt Management webpage on VA.gov, improving customers' digital experience by enabling them to check the status of VA debts related to the GI Bill, as well as other VA education benefits, disability compensation, pension, and VA-backed or VA direct home loans. The new webpage also allows Veterans to download debt letters, explore options for repayment, and submit debt resolution options through the new Financial Status Report. 🗣️

## » Enterprise Veteran Self-Service, Digital Experiences Support Easy Access to Benefits:

Continued migrating eBenefits to VA.gov, further consolidating the VA digital experience into a single online portal and coming a step closer to providing Veterans with a unified digital experience. Features migrated to VA.gov this FY include Veteran ability to access benefits payment history, securely establish or change direct deposit and apply for Veteran Readiness and Employment benefits. Additionally, U.S.- based Veterans and overseas active duty Service members and those active in the Reserves and National Guard can submit new claims for disability compensation and dependency benefits online, upload military service treatment records support claims for disability benefits, and generate and print benefits and service history letters. 🗣️







## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE ENGAGEMENT



### » Veterans Experience Action Center (VEAC) Events:

Joined forces with State Departments of Veterans Affairs, community and strategic partners to virtually connect Veterans, family members, caregivers and survivors to services and benefits they have earned. In FY2021, due to continued COVID-19 precautions, VEO conducted eight virtual VEACs in Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Kentucky, Montana, and Pennsylvania. These events allowed VA to engage hard-to-reach Veterans, including seniors, women, homeless and transitioning Service members, to improve access to VA care, benefits and services and provide positive outcomes. Through these eight VEACs, VA served 3,548 Veterans, family members, caregivers and survivors, connecting 117 Veterans to peer-to-peer services. VEO began measuring the impact of these events through Community Signals (CSignals) surveys, which are administered directly following each individual's participation in the virtual VEAC. Of the 2,038 respondents, the event achieved a 73.3% Trust score, 84.6% Ease score, 87.9% Effectiveness score and 93.1% Emotion score.

#### FY2021 (CSignals) Survey Data:

##### 2,039 RESPONSES



Ease **84.6%**



Effectiveness **87.9%**



Emotion **93.1%**



Trust **73.3%**

##### PROMOTER SCORE

**89.5%**

As part of the VEAC events, VA incorporated a 2-year pilot to connect Veterans to local peer-to-peer networks to address Veteran suicide. This pilot is in accordance with House Report 116-63 (VetsCorps), in which VEO is the lead agent for implementation. VEO is targeting six sites, focusing on low rates of VA utilization and leveraging existing strategic partners and peer-to-peer networks to accomplish its goal of addressing Veteran suicide and VA enrollment.



### Strategic Marketing and Communications (VEAC Pilot):

VEO utilized several methods to target underserved, at-risk Veterans in areas with lower rates of VA utilization through digital marketing and conventional advertising. Using GovDelivery, VEO sent geographically targeted emails about events to engaged Veterans in counties identified as rural and utilized conventional advertising, such as newspaper ads and Facebook, to target those not engaged with VA. Finding ways to market events to Veterans not engaged with VA is vital to the long-term impact of VEACs for all Veteran populations. VEO also explored new marketing avenues for events in Montana and California, employing Spotify advertisements to increase participant registration, particularly for Veterans not currently engaged with VA.

In our continuing efforts to better reach underserved, transitioning Service members and other Veterans who may not currently utilize VA benefits and services or could not attend virtual VEACs, VA worked with RallyPoint to leverage their digital platform to host Vet XL live Q&A events. Many national partners participate in VetXL events including: American Red Cross, Team Rubicon, ETS Sponsorship, Team Red, White, and Blue, Student Veterans of America, Bob Woodruff Foundation, George Bush Institute, America's Warrior Partnership, Elizabeth Dole Foundation. Notably, these events resulted in 1.45M views and 2.6K questions/comments/responses.







» **Federal Advisory Committee (FAC):** VEO supports two FACs, the Veterans and Community Oversight and Engagement Board (VCOEB) and the Veterans' Family, Caregiver and Survivor (VFCS) FACs.





## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE ENGAGEMENT



- **VCOEB:** On June 29, 2021, members of the VCOEB met and voted to approve six recommendations. The full VCOEB previously participated in several conference calls with VA to include bi-monthly updates/discussions with the West Los Angeles Integrated Project Team. These exchanges leveraged VCOEB's extensive experience to further understand the VA process. Because of this engagement, evaluation of available information, and experience with large multifaceted developments, the VCOEB offered six recommendations believed to be essential in determining how best to use the Greater Los Angeles Campus in a Veteran-centric manner for Veterans living on or visiting the campus. The recommended actions aim to provide superior care, support, convenience and customer service while simultaneously addressing the crisis of Veteran homelessness throughout the community and creating additional educational opportunities for all Veterans in Los Angeles.  
- **VFCS FAC:** On September 23, 2021, the VFCS FAC met virtually and voted to approve seven recommendations. The FAC is comprised of two subcommittees (Families and Caregivers; Survivor) who met twice (virtually) over the summer to craft the recommendations. The Federal Advisory Committee Act requires that the full committee vote on recommendations, which are then forwarded to the VA Secretary for approval. Once the recommendations are forwarded, the VA Secretary has 120 days to respond. All the recommendations are related to Veterans' families, caregivers, and survivors across all generations, relationships, and Veteran status; the use, and where necessary possible expansion, of VA care, benefits, and memorial services by Veterans' families, caregivers, and survivors.    

### VA is here for you.

Call 1-800-MyVA411

or visit <https://www.va.gov/contact-us/>

### Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255 and press 1

[CHAT](#), or Text 838255.

### Download the VA Welcome Kit

<https://www.va.gov/welcome-kit/>

### VA events calendar

<https://www.va.gov/outreach-and-events/events/>

### Sign up for #VetResources weekly emails

<https://www.va.gov/vetresources/>

### Download VA's Trust Report

<https://www.va.gov/trust>

### For more information on VA customer experience

EMAIL [Vets-Experience@va.gov](mailto:Vets-Experience@va.gov)



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Experience Office